Copy of letter from Rev. Geo. Williams, Niobrara Nebraska - Aug. 28/81

All the Ponca questions are now settled. "Standing Bear" has returned from Washington, having agreed upon a basis for the future. So far as the Poncas are concerned, the three points of policy refered to in my last letter, as a permanant plan of action, are settled. Land in severalty is granted on their old home, at the rate of one square mile to each head of family (640 acres) + for each single person, 160 acres. To this the government will add, in accordance with former policy aid in schools, + agriculture. For all missionary schools, aid will be given in rations for all pupils in boarding schools. Thus you can start a boarding school as economically as any other way, except cost of building + furniture. Now, considering the fact, that there is no school west of the Missouri, + north of the Niobrara for either Poncas or Sioux, + that the new policy of government with the Sioux is to encourage them to come + occupy lands formerly in the Ponca reserve, will you not be warranted in opening a boarding school from the outset? True the Santee mission of Bro. Riggs will be but 25 miles East, and the Episcopal school of Mr Williamson among the Yanktons but 30 miles North; yet both are inaccessable alike to the Poncas and neighboring Sioux; besides both have all they can care for.

It appears to me that you have the golden opportunity, especially among the Poncas + half breed Sioux. I know none of your plans nor of the means at your command for this use; but feel it due you to state all points that might give you aid in judging the case, as fast as they open up to me. I have steadily conferred with agent at Santee agency, + in the early part of the year we were both of opinion that large schools were not called for: as there were both mission + gov't boarding schools at the agency; but the present status is quite changed; those schools being well filled,

+ this new field, with its new opportunities, so changed. He told me last week, that he had orders to issue full & ample rations to all schools, mission as well as gov't, + in one instance at Flandro — to pay boarding money. He says we can certainly count steadily on this. Thus your estimate of cost would include buildings + salaries of teachers + matron, helps, +c. Largely the work at these schools is done by boys + girls alike in kitchen + care of rooms, so the helps bill is small. Now I would be pleased to learn if you contemplate opening up the work this autumn, as the Poncas are so anxious, almost impatient of the long waiting. I feel that my work for them can do little more until we get the school started. Will Mr Boyd come on, + if so, when? These questions relate to my plans of work on the Elkhorn Valley at points fifty or seventy five miles from here, + I desire to plan not to be there, when wanted here. The heat has been terrible for long preaching tours, + yet I had to push them or lose ground on which I had bestowed many a hard journey. Last Saturday I rode 30 miles at with the thermometer at 96 to 103 from morning to evening, + then preach to a neighborhood in a private house; drove 7 miles in early morning + preached to 63 persons in a log school-house, thence 14 miles in torrid heat + preached in another log school house at 3 P.M. + thence five miles for an evening service + thence 20 miles home the same night. I was utterly overcome by the heat, or would not have returned home, but was to have pushed on 40 miles to the Elkhorn Valley. Such being my pressure, I want to know when to look for Mr Boyd.

Most truly

(Signed) G. Williams

Niobrara Aug. 26/81

To be returned to Mrs. J. & H. Haines 28 Centre St. New York City

Copy of letter
from Rev. Geo. Williams
about Boarding-School
needed for Chickasaw-
Poncas & Otoes -

Aug/81 -

The interpreter for Standing Bear has just been here, & wishes me to write you for advice as to a proposition, now made by the Sec'y of Interior, to unite the Poncas & Omahas on the Omaha reserve -
The Sec'y sent an to the Omahas some weeks since, & at the same time sent to Standing Bear to ask him to council with his people about such a plan. This was at first taken very hard by the old chief, who feared another attempt at the old treatment. I endeavored to reassure the entire band & advised them to consult very carefully over all the questions involved & then send to the Sec'y as to their feelings about the case & the wish of the band. Later when the Sec'y asked to have the chiefs of the Omaha & Poncas come to Washington, I urged Standing Bear to trust to the integrity of the Sec'y & regard his wish so far as to go to confer with him. This they have talked over much, & last night held council, & agreed to have the chief go & confer about the case. Now they want advice from friends & most of all from the Mission friends as to what they had better do. They wish to know if the friends who have done so much for them would approve the move, & also desire to know if you think the school & Mission can be handled to any better advantage at the Omaha reserve than separately - one mission there & one here. I am of the opinion that if the friends approve the act, they would unite with the Omahas & perhaps other means could be used to better advantage in that case. I regret that we are now deprived of the council of the late J. M. Lindsay. I have looked over the few of his letters that came safely through the flood, & find in one of Jan 4th that we had discussed this possibility & that he looked upon it with favor in case it should be perfectly acceptable to themselves & could be the means of making aid & church charity serve to better advantage. It appears from the correspondence to have

been our opinion at that time that the Omaha reserve would be every way as acceptable in climate, soil etc while the Kindred tribes speaking one Language would naturally harmonize & prosper together. Later in our correspondence the liability or prospect appears to have been abandoned & all our plans appear to have contemplated this as their destined home.

As I understand them today the wish is for your advice or opinion on two points / Will the church that has aided them so much approve the union of the tribes? 2nd Will the Bond be able to make better use of funds in the new, than the present order of things? They want to settle all questions now forever & be settled in all their interests.

I have thus presented the case by their request with such facts as might aid in any way in the answer. They have yielded to my urgent request to let Standing Bear go to Washington & your advice will probably go far to determine the results. I feel that I ought to ask the advice of Mrs. Sinclair about this plan, as she may have some knowledge of the late wishes of her husband.

Most truly Yours.

(Signed) Geo Williams.

Niobrara Neb. July 21st 1880

Poncas – Niobrara
Nebraska
July 21 /81 –